

MEMORANDUM FOR:

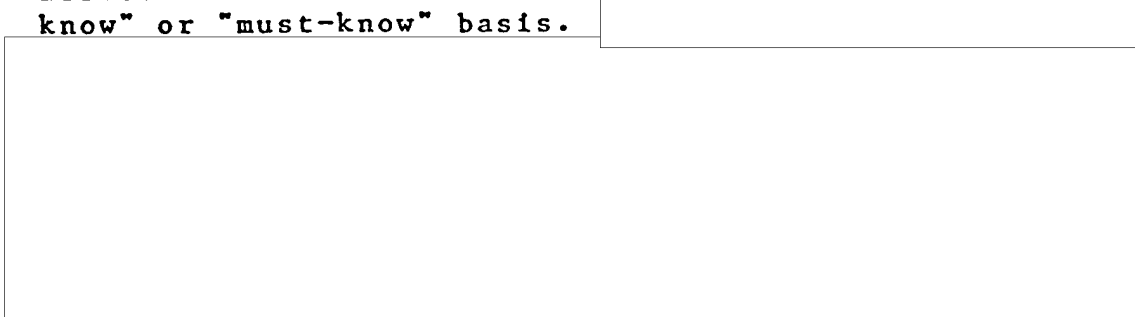
SUBJECT: Leaks and the Dissemination of Intelligence

1. In recent years, the National Intelligence Council, which is responsible for the production of all National Intelligence assessments, and CIA's Directorate of Intelligence have moved aggressively to understand better the priority issues and problems facing US policymakers and to increase the production and dissemination of finished intelligence responsive to those requirements. We have tried to accommodate the growing number and diversity of users of intelligence and, at the same time, have tried to be more forthright about our level of confidence in our judgments and the reliability of our information, all with a view to making assessments more useful.

2. It is most unfortunate that these efforts have taken place during a period when the years-long decline of discipline and security consciousness in the government has accelerated and leaks of sensitive intelligence information and assessments have become nearly uncontrollable. Tragically, we have now reached the point where the costs and risks to intelligence sources and methods--and thence to our national security interests--now outweigh the benefits of broader dissemination of intelligence products.

3. Obviously, no single measure can stem, much less end, the stream of unauthorized disclosures. Nonetheless, it is our responsibility to do what we can to limit the damage. With the approval of the Director of Central Intelligence, effective today I am directing the following actions:

- Henceforth all National Intelligence Estimates and assessments will be disseminated on a strict "need-to-know" or "must-know" basis.



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5. The choice we face is between severely restricting dissemination or so diluting and generalizing our assessments as to seriously impair their value. These restrictions on dissemination are undertaken with the greatest reluctance, in part because they directly contravene the diligent efforts we have made to expand intelligence support to the policy community and the Congress. We hope that when discipline is restored, we can again expand our dissemination. In the meantime, we hope that these and other related measures will diminish the number and damage of leaks and make possible more successful investigations of leaks.

Robert M. Gates
Chairman
National Intelligence Council
and
Deputy Director for Intelligence
Central Intelligence Agency